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FM THE SITUATION ROOM
TO HENRY A KISSINGER
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T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY WH27163

DELIVER IN SEALED ENVELOPE DIRECT TO MR. KISSINGER. THERE ARE TO BE NO FILE COPIES RETAINED ON THIS MESSAGE.

TOHAK26

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INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

AUGUST 15, 1972 (DELIVER IN SEALED ENVELOPE DIRECT TO MR. KISSINGER)

FOR: KISSINGER

FROM: HAIG

IN CONNECTION WITH OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION, THIS MORNING'S ANNOUNCEMENT RECEIVED ONE INCH BANNER HEADLINES IN THIS AFTERNOON'S STAR. THE GENERAL THRUST OF THE ARTICLE BY HORNER IS THAT YOUR MEETING ON MONDAY IN PARIS WAS OBVIOUSLY CLOSELY LINKED, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY GEARED SPECIFICALLY TO THAT MEETING. THERE ARE ALSO FBIS REPORTS ALREADY ON THE WIRE CONCERNING YOUR COUNTERPART'S RETURN TO HANOI. WHEN THIS BECOMES PUBLIC LATER TODAY, WE ARE BOUND TO HAVE MASSIVE SPECULATION. MY PERSONAL JUDGEMENT IS THAT ZIEGLER'S TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE THIS MORNING WAS ABOUT RIGHT SINCE IT WILL GIVE YOU A BASIS FOR INSISTING TO THE OTHER SIDE THAT WE DID NOT SANDBAG THEM AND PLAYED IT COMPLETELY STRAIGHT.

CONCERNING THE PROBLEM I HAD THIS MORNING WITH HALDEMAN. YESTERDAY EVENING I GAVE THE PRESIDENT A BRIEF WRAPUP OF YOUR REPORTING CABLE. THIS MORNING HALDEMAN CALLED ME AND SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD WRITTEN ON THE MEMORANDUM THAT IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE TALKS ARE GOING TO GO NOWHERE, AND THAT YOU AND I TEND TO EXPECT MORE THAN WILL EVER COME OF IT. HE ADDED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REAL CONCERN WAS THAT TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND WHAT WILL FOLLOW WILL ONLY RAISE EXPECTATIONS WHICH BY OCTOBER WILL NOT HAVE BEEN REALIZED AND CONSEQUENTLY COULD RESULT IN INTENSIFIED DISILLUSIONMENT WHICH PEAKS OFF AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN THE CAMPAIGN.

END PAGE ONE

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HALDEMAN THEN ASKED ME TO REVIEW THE GAME PLAN AND I DID SO USING THE PRECISE DETAILS THAT YOU HAD ALREADY GIVEN TO HIM TWICE ON SATURDAY. I POINTED OUT THAT THUS FAR EVERYTHING WAS PROCEEDING PRECISELY THE WAY WE HAD PLANNED AND IN A WAY IN WHICH WE WOULD GAIN MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE WHETHER OR NOT THE ENTERPRISE THAT YOU ARE INVOLVED IN SUCCEEDS. OBVIOUSLY, IF IT SUCCEEDS THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED AT THE CRITIC JUNCTURE. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND IT IS NECESSARY TO TERMINATE THE ACTIVITY AND GO PUBLIC, WE WILL HAVE SET A RECORD WHICH WILL BE MOST CREDIBLE WHILE IN THE INTERIM HAVING BOUGHT TIME DURING WHICH WITHOUT THIS ACTIVITY WE WOULD HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO INCREASING ATTACK. I ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ACTIVITY WITH THE LARGER POWER IN SEPTEMBER AND THE SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD ALSO CONFIRM TO OUR CRITICS THAT EVEN IF WE HAVE NO SUCCESS WITH RESPECT TO YOUR CURRENT PROJECT WE ARE PROCEEDING WITHOUT ABANDONING THE PRINCIPLE AND WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ACHIEVING CONTINUED MAJOR BREAKTHROUGHS WITH THE LARGER POWERS.

HALDEMAN SEEMED MUCH REASSURED AND SEEMED TO BE SEEKING COUNTER ARGUMENTS TO USE WITH OUR FRIEND. I PERSONALLY SENSE THAT ALL OF THIS TRERBIS MORNING EMERGED FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH A FORMER CABINET MEMBER WHO IS BACK IN TOWN AND WHOSE NAME HAD POPPED UP IN THE CONVERSATION. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT IN MY MIND ABOUT THE SOURCE OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY HALDEMAN. I ASKED IF HE HAD ANY VIABLE ALTERNATIVE AND IF HE WERE PREPARED TO RIDE OUT AN ALTERNATIVE COURSE SUCH AS IMMEDIATE TERMINATION AND A SHIFT TO THE HARD LINE. I ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THUS FAR AND OUR ABILITY TO GLIDE THROUGH WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DISASTROUS SPRING WERE A DIRECT RESULT OF THE STRATEGY LAID OUT IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER WHICH CULMINATED IN THE PUBLIC REVELATIONS OF JANUARY.

MY PERSONAL VIEW IS THAT THE PROBLEM IS NOT WITH THE PRINCIPAL BUT WITH A VERY STRONG MINDED FORMER CABINET MEMBER WHO SEEMS TO FEEL COMPELLED TO DELVE INTO OUR BUSINESS. ON BALANCE, THE TEMPERATURE LEVEL IS NOT ANYWHERE NEAR AS HIGH AS IT HAS BEEN ON OCCASIONS IN THE PAST AND I DO NOT WISH TO GENERATE UNDUE CONCERN AT YOU END. IN FACT, I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE DIVIDENDS OF TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND THOSE TO COME WILL MORE THAN SERVE TO SUPPRESS THIS PROBLEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, I DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD LOSE SIGHT OF THE INFLUENCE WHICH THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM MAY EXERCISE AS THE GAME PLAN SPINS OUT.

END PAGE TWO

WE ARE LAYING ON THE TRANSPORTATION FOR NEXT WEEK AND WILL HAVE DAVID IN KEY BISCAYNE WEDNESDAY MORNING AND ELIZABETH IN WASHINGTON ON THURSDAY MORNING. I WILL HAVE A COMPLETE SCENARIO FOR YOU SHORTLY.
WARM REGARDS.

1050

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